



SAFETY ADVISOR



MARCH TRIVIA

“Beware the Ides of March”

- ◇ What is an “ides”?
- ◇ Do you know where the quote originated?
- ◇ Have you ever used the quote?

Let us help:

- ◇ “ides” is the name of the date under the Roman calendar for the 15th of March (May, July, October) and the 13th of the other months
- ◇ In ancient Rome the Ides of March was a festive day dedicated to the god Mars
- ◇ Julius Caesar declared himself dictator of Rome for life
- ◇ Caesar was warned by a soothsayer to be on guard against a great peril on the Ides of March
- ◇ Caesar was stabbed to death by fellow senators - on the Ides of March - as predicted.

“In like a lion, out like a lamb”

- ◇ Know where/how this originated?
- ◇ Know what it refers to?

For millennia, humans have strived to make accurate weather predictions. Thus, weather lore is full of anecdotes, rhymes, and adages meant to guide the uncertain in determining what weather the next day will bring.

Centuries ago, people often believed that bad spirits could affect the weather adversely, so they were cautious as to what they did or did not do in certain situations. Those beliefs often included

ideas that there should be a balance in weather and life. So, if a month came in bad (like a lion), it should go out good and calm (like a lamb).

With March being such a changeable month, in which we can see warm spring-like temperatures or late season cold fronts (or in northern states, snowstorms), you can understand how this saying might hold true in some instances. We can only hope that if March starts off cold and stormy it will end warm and sunny. And, the key word is hope.

The phrase apparently has its origins with the constellations Leo, the Lion, and Aries, the ram or lamb. It has to do with the relative positions of these constellations in the sky at the beginning and end of the month. (See page 3 for further information.)

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>March Trivia</i>	1
<i>Slips, Trips, and Falls</i>	2
<i>Stargazing</i>	3
<i>Bicycle Safety</i>	4
<i>Living with Household Chemicals</i>	5
<i>Safety Slogan Winners</i>	8
<i>Customer Satisfaction Survey</i>	9
<i>Calendar</i>	10

Slips, Trips, and Falls

Slips, trips, and falls, make up the largest category of injuries, both at the workplace and at home. The Department of Transportation is no exception. In 2008, the largest category of workers' compensation claims was for slips, trips, and falls.

What can we do to prevent us from becoming a statistic?

DO

- ◇ Keep all areas free of clutter that could cause a trip
- ◇ Be careful working around equipment, especially when footing is bad
- ◇ Think about your actions before you take them
- ◇ Clean up spills immediately
- ◇ Resist the temptation to take short cuts
- ◇ Check your ladder at each use to ensure it is in good condition
- ◇ Maintain adequate lighting in all areas

DON'T

- Leave oil slicks uncovered
- Jump from a vehicle or piece of equipment
- Leave tools on the workbench when you finish using them
- Be in a hurry
- Take short cuts

Don't do this:



Or this:



Or this:



This monthly newsletter is produced by the State Safety Office under the supervision of Marianne A. Trussell, the Department's Chief Safety Officer.

For content information, please call the editor pro tem at: 850 245-1504

Our internet address is:
www.dot.state.fl.us/safety

Our intranet address is:
Infonet.dot.state.fl.us/safetyoffice/

STARGAZING with Jack Horkheimer

IN LIKE A LION, OUT LIKE A LAMB

GREETINGS, GREETINGS, FELLOW STARGAZERS AND BOY, DON'T YOU JUST LOVE SPRING? I ESPECIALLY ENJOY THE SOFT MUTED STARS OF SPRING THAT ECHO THE GENTLE COLORS OF EARTH'S LANDSCAPE!



YOU KNOW, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED BY FOLKLORE - ESPECIALLY PHRASES THAT WE LEARN DURING CHILDHOOD, THE ORIGINS OF WHICH WE HAVE LITTLE OR NO IDEA OF.



I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD THAT OLD PHRASE ABOUT MARCH WEATHER THAT GOES "IN LIKE A LION, OUT LIKE A LAMB" AND VICE-VERSA. BUT WHERE DID THIS COME FROM?



WELL, IT APPEARS THIS PHRASE GOT ITS IMAGERY FROM THE HEAVENS!



IF YOU GO OUTSIDE ON MARCH 1ST AT 8 P.M., AND LOOK ABOVE THE WESTERN HORIZON, YOU'LL SEE THE DIM STARS THAT MAKE UP ARIES, THE RAM OR LAMB.



BUT IF YOU LOOK ALMOST OPPOSITE, AT ABOUT THE SAME HEIGHT ABOVE THE HORIZON IN THE EAST, YOU'LL SEE THE CONSTELLATION LEO, THE LION.



SO THE LION IS RISING INTO THE NIGHT SKY AT THE BEGINNING OF MARCH, WHICH SUPPORTS THE FACT THAT MARCH USUALLY BEGINS WITH FIERCER WEATHER.



WELL, 'AHEM... ONE MONTH LATER, ON MARCH 31ST AT 8 P.M., HOWEVER, THE LION WILL BE ALMOST OVERHEAD AND THE LAMB WILL BE SMACK-DAB ON THE WESTERN HORIZON.



NOW, WE ALL KNOW THAT USUALLY THE WEATHER AT THE END OF MARCH IS Milder THAN THE WEATHER AT THE BEGINNING OF MARCH, SO THE LAMB SETTING INDICATES THAT MARCH IS GOING OUT LIKE A LAMB!



SO PERHAPS LONG AGO SOMEONE TIED ALL THIS TOGETHER AND DECIDED TO POETICALLY LINK BOTH CONSTELLATIONS TO THE WEATHER, COMING UP WITH THAT OLD PHRASE. WHATEVER, MAY YOU ALWAYS HAVE CLEAR SKIES IN MARCH FOR VIEWING THE LION AND THE LAMB, WHICH IS EASY IF YOU REMEMBER TO KEEP LOOKING UP!



Watch Jack Horkheimer: StarGazer, the award-winning international television series sponsored by ODYSSEY magazine. StarGazer is a production of WPBT Miami, produced in cooperation with the Miami Museum of Science and Space Transit Planetarium. Check your local PBS station for show times.

40

Illustrated by Rich Harrington/text by Stephen James O'Meara

March is Florida Bicycle Safety Month

Did you know that by law children under the age of 16 must properly wear an approved bicycle helmet? Sec. 316.2065(3)(d), Florida Statutes.

Ninety-five percent of bicyclists killed in 2006 reportedly weren't wearing helmets.



Bicycling is a good source of family oriented exercise and an environmentally friendly mode of transportation. But many cyclists are putting themselves at unnecessary risk. Look around, do you see a lot of families bicycling? Look again - are only the children wearing helmets? First, you are increasing your risk of head injury and brain trauma every time you ride without a helmet. Second, you are not setting a good safety example for your children or others. Use by adults promotes and supports the practice among younger riders.

Do as I say and not as I do is not the way to instill good behavior of any kind in others. Setting a good example works at home and on the job. If co-workers see us setting a good example by taking necessary precautions and being safe, they may be encouraged to adopt a safety culture of their own and do their jobs in a more safe manner.

Wearing a bicycle helmet generally doesn't prevent a cyclist from crashing (except if it helps a motorist notice the cyclist sooner). It reduces the risk of head injury in the event of a crash. Head injuries account for about one eighth of the emergency room visits of injured cyclists. However, they account for about 70% of cyclists' *fatal* injuries. Based upon numerous studies on the subject, it is estimated that helmet use reduces the risk of fatal injury in a cyclist crash by approximately 70%.

Be safe. Use personal protective equipment at home and on the job.

Tips for safe bicycling

Select a bike that fits - rely on the experts at a good bicycle shop

Choose the right helmet - make sure it is approved and fits properly

Obey the rules of the road - bicycles are vehicles, ride with the flow of traffic

Stay visible - wear bright and reflective clothing and use lights front and back

Maintain good form while riding and stay in shape - proper posture while biking reduces the likelihood of discomfort

Stay cool and well hydrated - wear light-weight clothes and drink plenty of water

Wear the proper shoes - wear shoes with rigid soles and void flip flops

Keep you bike well maintained - routine maintenance is a must

Teach your children well - take the time to teach your kids the rules of safe biking

Avoid biking in bad weather whenever possible - avoid rainy, foggy, and icy conditions

Learn more (not during work hours):

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/index.htm>
<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>
<http://bicyclesafe.com/>

LIVING with Household Chemicals

by Gregg Losey and D1 Safety

We live in an age with containers under our kitchen sink filled with more chemicals than a science laboratory of the early 20th century. Yet, we are so accustomed to using these products that we may not exercise sufficient caution.

When we are at work, we follow our training—read and study product labels and Material Safety Data Sheets (M.S.D.S.), use chemicals only for the intended purpose, and store them properly. These good habits need to become the safety procedures in the home.

Chemicals in the home give us cleaner, more sanitary, more pleasant lives. Used correctly, they help keep us and our surroundings clean and germ free, help to feed us, fuel our vehicles, and control disease-producing organisms, insects, and other pests. Used incorrectly, they may cause eye and skin irritation, breathing problems, fires and explosions, or absorption through the skin that reaches internal organs and may cause extreme illness, birth defects, even death.

In order to use chemicals correctly we should be aware of the signal words on the labels since these signal words tell how toxic a product can be. The strongest word is Danger/Poison, meaning that you must be extremely careful using this product so that it will not make you very sick or kill you. The next is Warning, used on items that could make you sick or could easily catch on fire. Finally there is Caution, usually indicating a skin, breathing, or eye danger.

Knowing the definitions of the terms on the label is vital:

- ◊Flammable – easily catches fire.
- ◊Combustible – can be ignited.
- ◊Toxic – it can kill you if ingested, inhaled, or absorbed through the skin. It can affect you immediately or after

days, weeks, or even years.

At this point I would like to say that this article is not the end-all answer to home safety; it is what I found in my home and my observations on these findings. If you disagree or wish to comment, please do. Somebody has to write the next article!

The Chemical Castle:

In order to see how much my family is affected by household and yard chemicals, I inventoried my kitchen, laundry room, bathroom, and garage.

In the kitchen I found several eye irritants—dishwasher detergent, dishwasher spot remover, dishwashing liquid, cleanser, citrus hand cleaner, and cook top cleaner. I found granite cleaner with a “keep out of the reach of children” label, and isopropyl alcohol and the citrus hand cleaner with “poison if ingested” labels.

The laundry room proved to be a treasure trove of chemicals. Eye/skin irritants included liquid detergent, laundry degreaser, concentrated disinfectant, carpet protector spray, vacuum cleaner deodorizer granules, metal polish, insect repellent, and, surprisingly, an organic and “green” household insect killer.

Those harmful or fatal if swallowed were the metal polish, goo remover, hydrogen peroxide, liquid disinfectant, ammonia, wood cleaner, furniture polish, rose food, azalea food, and finishing wax. A liquid bait ant killer label warned against absorption through the skin.

The insect spray, furniture polish, carpet spray, and finishing wax were all combustible, and the insect spray is flammable. The flammable warning made me think of sprays in the bathroom and kitchen. I found hair spray, bathroom deodorizing spray, bathroom disinfecting spray, and spray deodorant in the bathroom and cooking oil spray in the kitchen. All were labeled flammable and, by the way, eye irritants. Inhalation warnings were on the ammonia, carpet spray, metal polish, wood cleaner, and vac-

uum cleaner deodorizers. Now that I know that my house is TEEMING with chemicals that require careful handling, I have decided to read the labels and to follow common sense precautions when using these products. Also, I need to learn the symptoms of chemical poisoning.

Like my family, you probably have numerous chemicals everywhere in your home. Most chemical accidents do occur at home. In order to make your home use safer, here are some guidelines you might want to consider:

- ◇ Wash hands immediately after using a chemical, even before using the toilet. (You really don't want chemicals on any body part).
- ◇ Read and follow the directions for use, storage, and disposal. (The M.S.D.S. is always available from the manufacturer.)
- ◇ Do not try to "improve" a product by adding other substances.
 - ◇ ammonia + bleach = toxic fumes
 - ◇ flammable liquids + hydrogen peroxide = explosion
 - ◇ acids (pool) + oil or grease = fire
 - ◇ alkalines + epoxies = extreme heat
- ◇ Follow any label directions, such as
 - ◇ Avoid inhaling fumes
 - ◇ Use eye protection
 - ◇ Wear gloves
- ◇ Use adequate ventilation – use outside if possible, or open windows and run exhaust fans.
- ◇ Never use combustibles or flammables near an open flame, including cigarettes, candles, and fireplaces.
- ◇ When possible, use pump sprayers rather than aerosols.
- ◇ Consider safer alternatives
 - ◇ glass cleaner (equal parts water and white vinegar in a pump spray bottle)
 - ◇ mothballs (cedar chips)
 - ◇ toilet bowl cleaner (scrub with 1/2 cup borax in 1 gal. water and flush)

- ◇ air freshener (sprinkle area with baking soda or set out a dish of white vinegar).
- ◇ Clean clothing, tools, and mixing apparatus after handling a chemical, using care with runoff water.
- ◇ Clean up spills immediately with rags. Leave the rags outside to dry, put them in newspaper, then in plastic bags, and then into garbage cans.
- ◇ Have a class A, B, C fire extinguisher in the kitchen, laundry room, and garage near the exit doors.
- ◇ Take unused/partially used chemicals to a county collection facility or recycling/ disposal site. Call your County Solid Waste Division for site locations.
- ◇ Know the symptoms of chemical poisoning – difficulty breathing, headache/blurred vision, irritated eyes, skin or throat, changes in skin color, dizziness, lack of coordination, stomach cramps. These symptoms may not occur immediately.
- ◇ Call for help: 911, local poison control: 1-800-222-1222, or the National Pesticide Information Center (1-800-858-7378).

Enjoy your home. Enjoy the life style that modern chemicals afford. Like me, decide that you and your family are valuable enough that you will use household chemicals with the respect and care that they require.

OK, now I am going to check my garage for chemical hazards . . .

Garage Chemical Stuff:

We expect to find an automobile in our garage that brings with it gasoline, oil and grease, brake fluid, transmission fluid, and windshield washer fluid, but those of us who service our own vehicles have this and much more stored in containers. Toxic items include brake fluid, tire cleaner, tire protectant, glass cleaner, fuel system cleaner, oil, greases, spray lubricants, transmission fluid, and gasoline. The tire cleaner and protectant listed breathing warnings and are flammable, and all items plus vinyl

protectant, car soap, car wax, and windshield washer fluid were eye irritants. The most dangerous award may go to spray lubricants, spray adhesives, adhesive remover, and grease. These may affect the nervous system and cause liver and kidney damage. Some grease is toxic because it contains heavy metals that can be absorbed through the skin.

Yard work brings several types of fertilizers, insecticides, and herbicides to my garage. These are all toxic and all warn against breathing in the product, ingesting, or getting in the eyes.

Around the house projects yielded lots of painting supplies. All of the cans of solvent based spray paint were toxic, extremely flammable, cause breathing and skin absorption problems and, if you live in CA, could cause cancer. The water based spray paints warned against breathing fumes, skin absorption, and cancer in CA. Paint remover is extremely flammable, toxic, has dangerous fumes, should not be absorbed by the skin, and causes birth defects. Liquid nails, denatured alcohol, liquid deglosser, paint stripper, TSP cleaner, boiled linseed oil, mineral spirits, lacquer thinner, PVC cement, and metal polish are toxic, flammable or combustible, and are dangerous to the skin, eyes, or if ingested.

Am I the only one who has all of this stuff in the garage? I haven't even gotten to the general cleaning and repair products such as spray adhesives, spray solvents, general cleaners, epoxy, spray disinfectant, and toilet bowl cleaner. All are toxic, the sprays are flammable, and all pose dangers for breathing, for the eyes, and for skin absorption. Because toilet bowl cleaner is such a commonly used product and is so dangerous, everyone should read the label carefully. (You can use this stuff to remove rust stains from your driveway!)

Then there are the products that appear to be innocuous – polishing cloths that could become combustible, dry and wet batteries, which are corrosive and perhaps explosive (auto and lawnmower batteries emit explosive

gases when being charged), general cleaners, including bleach, that may be toxic and are breathing, eye, skin absorption, and ingestion hazards. Perhaps most ironic, in trying to be prepared for accidents, I have fire extinguishers in the garage, and they must be used with care because of the high pressure and breathing, absorption, and ingestion dangers. Even petroleum jelly has warnings against use in the eyes and ingestion.

I trust that you can run your home and garage with fewer chemicals than I can, but I suspect that your garage is a lot like mine. These products are necessary for me to maintain my home, my yard, and my vehicles. I do believe that they make my life better. I think about safety on the job, but because we relax at home, I might not always have safety on my mind when working around the house. I am glad that I took this inventory and did the label-reading exercise. I rounded up some old containers of chemicals that are not even listed here and took them to a waste disposal site. Remember that anything you bought in the 1990's is at least 10 years old!

In the future, I intend to follow the Personal Protection Equipment suggestion that is on almost every container in my garage. I trust that you will investigate your chemical collection too and that you will take precautions. Awareness of danger is, after all, the first step in safety, and preparing for it is the second. Share your knowledge and concern for proper use of chemicals with your family, especially youngsters.

Although I could probably find some other cans and bottles tucked away, it is time to get to work. Should I rearrange my garage or should I listen to my wife who is telling me to stop puttering around the garage and get out the fertilizers and herbicides to start the Spring gardening . . . or maybe a snack or nap. Some of the material in this article is from www.WaterMatters.org (SWFWMD), www.epa.gov/kidshometour, and www.redcross.org

Monthly themes are determined on an ad hoc basis.
Please feel free to submit safety slogans on any topic.

Safety Slogan Winners

***“MARCH” to the tune of
“SAFETY”***

***Sheila M. George
Ocala Operations Admin.***

***“Limit your distraction
to avoid a traffic infraction”***

***Jennifer McManus
D7 Procurement Office***

Safety Hot Line



(850) 245-1543

You can now report hazards by telephone.

You can stay anonymous.

Everything is confidential.

Action will be taken and you will
be notified within 30 days.

Safety Advisor Customer Satisfaction Survey

We are interested in your opinion. In order to better serve your needs, please take a moment to fill out this brief questionnaire. Send to:

Local Fax: 850 245-1554

Via US Postal Service (or inter-office mail) to the address shown below.

**Attention: Industrial Safety
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street, MS 53
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450**

Survey Questions	Yes	No
Are the Safety Advisor topics relevant to your day to day job?		
Have you ever used the Safety Smart web site?		
What would you suggest to improve the suitability of the Safety Advisor to our needs or to improve the overall quality? (Please be specific)		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
Do you have any questions regarding Industrial Safety programs and/or operations? Please feel free to include your questions or comments.		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		

Safety Slogan of the Month Entry Form

You are encouraged to submit safety slogans applicable to the month safety theme.

Slogans are judged on originality and relevance to the month's theme. (there are two themes each month)

You may also email your slogans to shanaz.sharifpour@dot.state.fl.us or nancy.lynn@dot.state.fl.us

In the subject line of your email please write ***"Safety Slogan Entry"***.

Please Print	
Safety Slogan for the month of _____	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
Name: _____	Location/Office: _____
District: _____	Phone: (____) _____

The Safety and Health Awareness Newsletter

Page 9

MARCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 daylight saving time begins	9	10	11	12	13 pay day	14
15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20 spring begins	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 pay day	28
29	30	31				

March

Florida Bicycle Safety Month

Mental Retardation Awareness Month

National Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Month

National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

National Eye Donor Month

National Kidney Month

National Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness Month

American Red Cross Month